

The future of Pierrefonds West

Presentation by Gareth Richardson
on behalf of the Green Coalition
to the Office de consultation publique de Montreal
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The Green Coalition/ Coalition Verte

- The Green Coalition/Coalition Verte (GCV) is a non-profit association of grassroots volunteers. Group and individual members are dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of the natural environment.
- The GCV has been actively campaigning against the development of the Pierrefonds West area even before it was excluded from the permanent agricultural zone in 1991.
- Our vision is to maintain all of it as a natural habitat forming a key part of a much larger protected area to be managed as a regional or national park for the benefit of all citizens of Montreal.

Sustainability

- The Bruntland Commission in 1987 defined Sustainable Development as:
'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'
- Preserving sufficient natural areas to support biodiversity, provide ecosystem services and promote human health and well being is a vital element to a sustainable future which must not be sacrificed for short term financial gain
- The rights of individual landowners do not take precedence over our collective right to a healthy and sustainable environment

Biodiversity

- Biodiversity is vital to the web of interconnected organisms that sustains all life on earth
- Maintenance of biodiversity is a key element of a sustainable future
- Report catalogues a wealth of plant and animal species including 11 animal and 9 plant species designated as threatened, vulnerable or susceptible to being designated.
- The loss and fragmentation of habitat from development would inevitably have a major impact on the biodiversity of the whole region



Natural Infrastructure Ecosystem Services

- Natural infrastructure or capital in the form of vegetation cover and viable wetlands are essential to mitigate the impacts of climate change
- Forests and wetlands help to prevent flooding. Vegetation also reduces both erosion and the heat island effect
- Report estimates the annual value of ecosystem services provided by area targeted for development at \$285,000.

Ecosystem services and natural capital

Pierrefonds-West development project



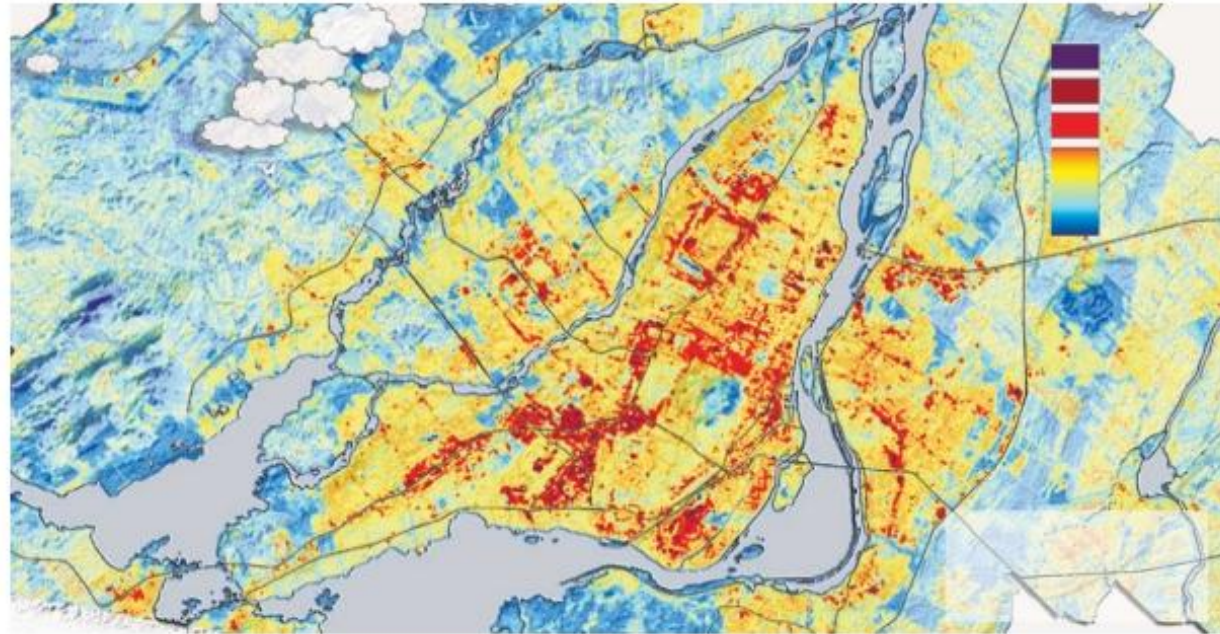
May 2015



Natural Infrastructure

Climate Change

- Temperature map of the Montreal region clearly shows the cooling effect of vegetated areas
- With increasing global temperatures this effect will become even more important

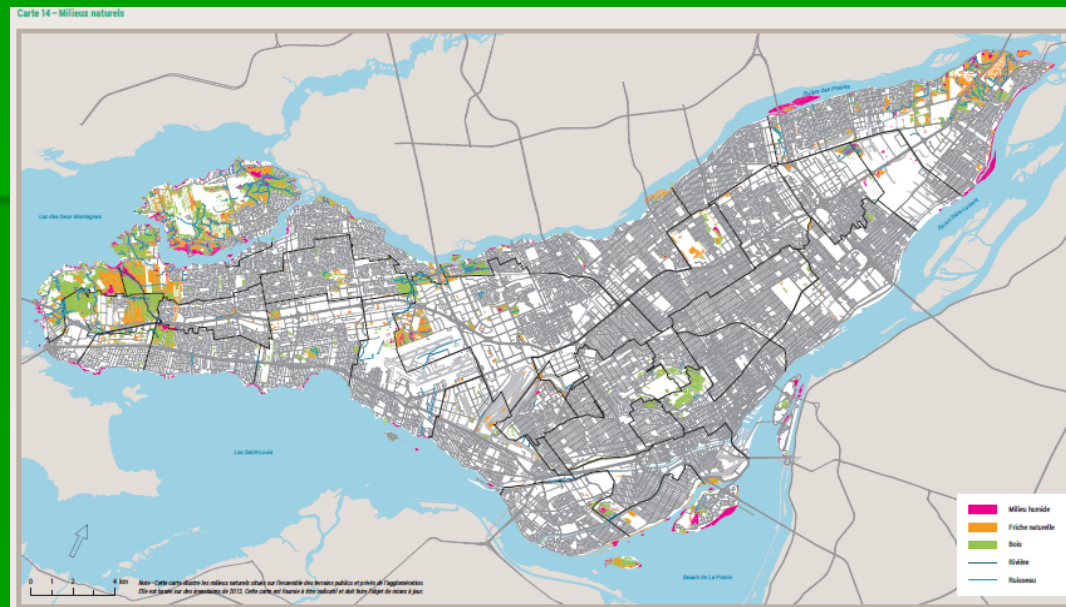


Access to Natural Environments and Human Health

- An increasing number of studies have demonstrated that access to natural areas creates positive physical and psychological health benefits.
- A healthier, happier, population provides significant economic benefits including reduced health care costs, reduced absenteeism and improved productivity
- Coupled with adequate provision for public transport the park concept described below offers all Montrealers the possibility of access to a significant natural area without leaving the island.

Protection Targets

- Current protection target 10% of the land area of the Agglomeration set in the SAD but falls far short of the 17% objective of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11
- 10% would provide 2.6 ha per 1000 residents - still be low compared to other cities
- Little green space is left and achieving the 10% target will be a challenge
- Sacrificing 185 ha (0.4%) will make it even more difficult



Connectivity

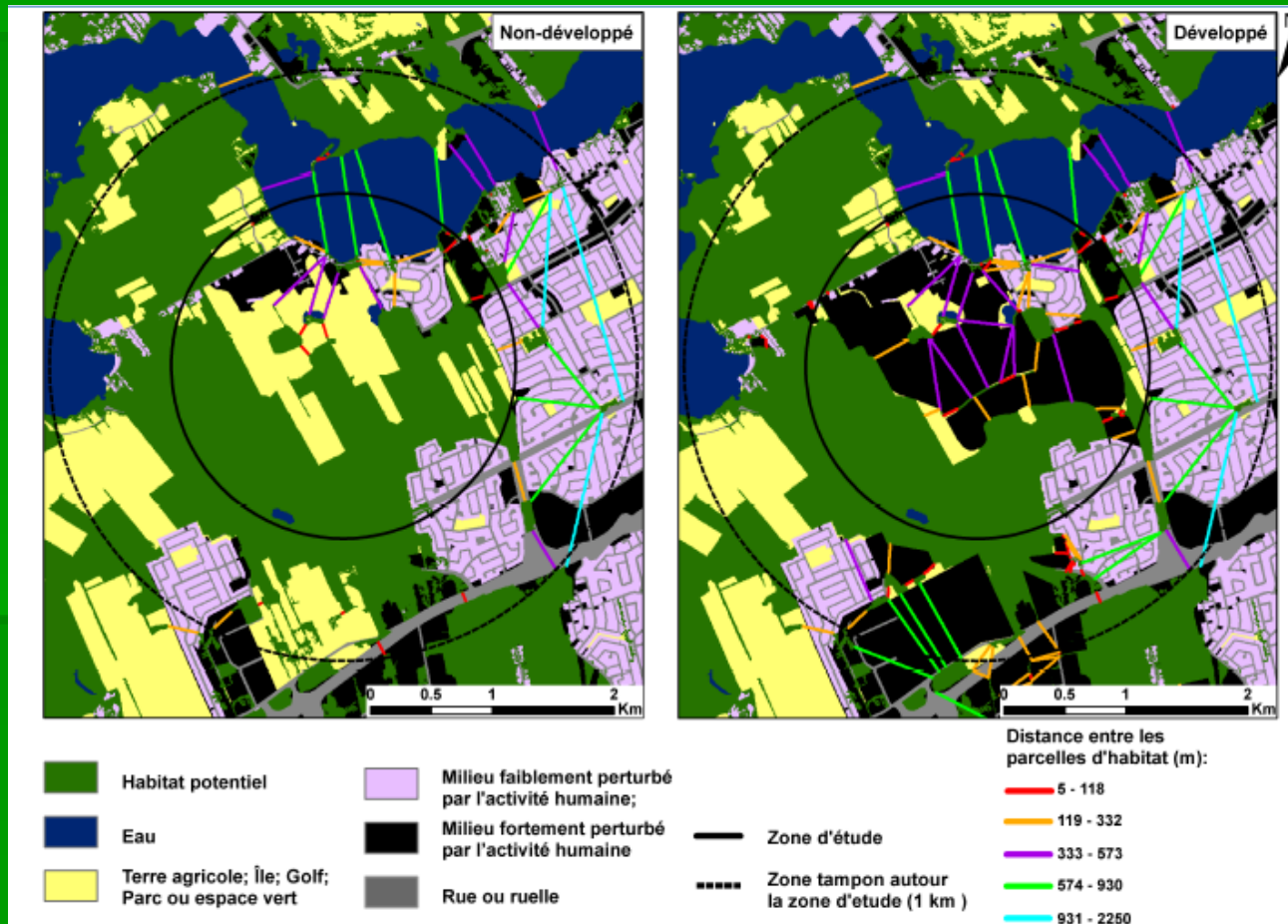
- Report concludes:
'development in the study area will significantly impact terrestrial biodiversity through a loss of habitat, and increase in landscape fragmentation and a decrease in functional habitat connectivity.'
- Overall loss in connectivity estimated to be about 27%.
- Clearly demonstrates how important the area is to the ecological viability of the region.

The impacts of the Cap Nature real estate project (Pierrefonds West) on ecological connectivity



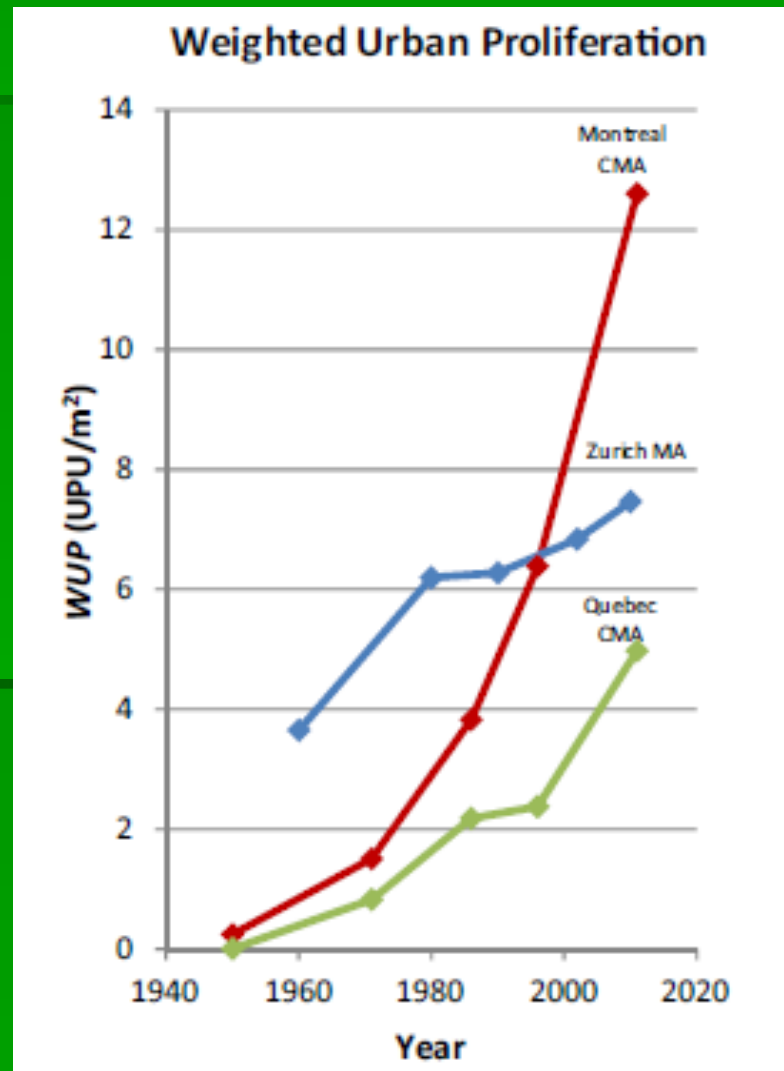
Connectivity

Structural Fragmentation



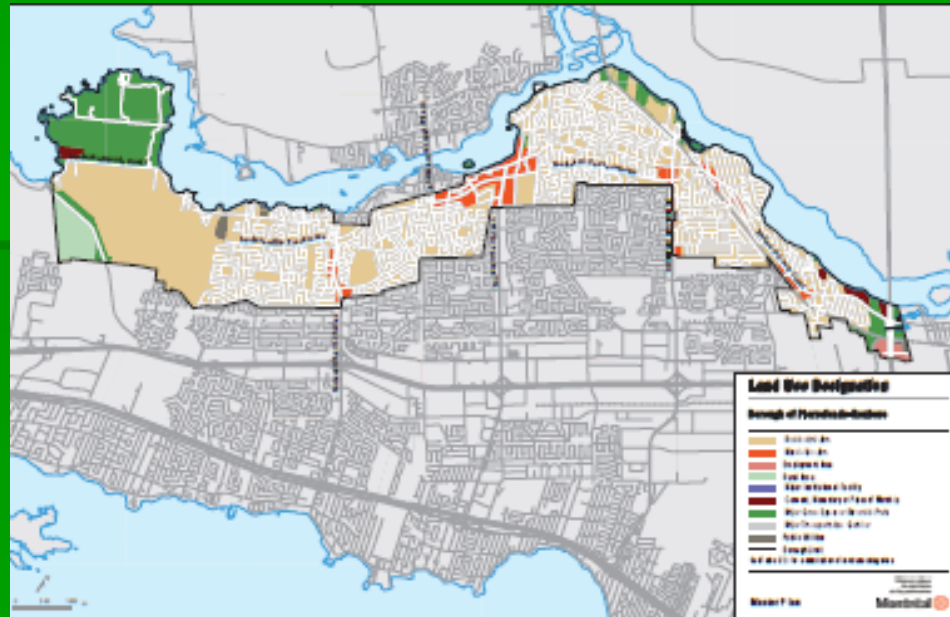
Urban Sprawl

- Report Accelerated Urban Sprawl in Montreal, Quebec City and Zurich 1951-2011 concludes that Urban Sprawl in the Montreal region is out of control and increasing at an exponential rate.
- Mainly due to a relatively stable population appropriating more and more space for housing.
- Development in Pierrefonds-West can only make this situation worse.



Impact on Pierrefonds-Roxboro

- Borough is already excessively stretched out from East to West making it difficult to provide adequate services from a central location
- An investment of around \$100M will be required to provide infrastructure and services to a new development
- There are more appropriate areas for development in Pierrefonds



Lake of Two Mountains Park

- First proposed by the GCV in 2005
- Would encompass the Senneville Woods, Bois-de-la-Roche Agricultural Park and the Rivière à l'Orme and Île Bizard Ecoforest Corridors covering an area of over 2000 ha.
- The diversity of habitat and the connectivity provided by the Pierrefonds West area would clearly make a vital contribution to such a park.

